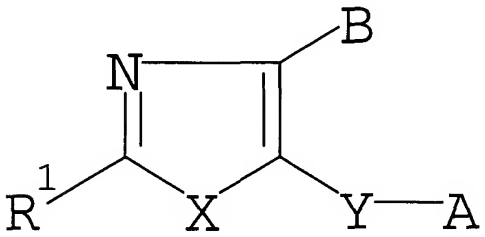
In the Claims

Prior to calculating the filing fees, please make the following amendment to the Claims.

Please Cancel Claims 2, 4, 5, 7, 14, 16, 17, 19, 25-28, 31, 39-42, 44, 46 and 48-58 (inclusive), without prejudice to future continuing applications.

Please Amend the Claims to read as follows, without prejudice to future continuing applications, prior to calculating the filing fee.

1. (AMENDED) **A method for preventing or treating chronic pain, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, diabetic cardiomyopathy, peripherial nerve injury, spinal injury, multiple sclerosis, cerebral ischemic disease, senile dementia of Altzheimer type, Parkinson's disease, Huntington's chorea, depression, inflammatory bowel disease, behavioral abnormalities accompanied by dementia, or anxiety in a mammal in need thereof, said method comprising administering to said mammal an effective amount of a** [[A]] neurotrophin production/secretion promoting agent which comprises an azole derivative of the formula :



wherein R^1 represents a halogen atom, a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted, a hydroxy group which may optionally be substituted, a thiol group which may optionally be substituted, or an amino group which may optionally be substituted; A represents an acyl group which may optionally be substituted, a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted, a hydroxy group which may optionally be substituted, or a carboxyl group which may optionally be esterified or amidated; B represents an aromatic group which may optionally be substituted; X represents oxygen atom, sulfur atom, or nitrogen atom which may optionally be substituted; and Y represents a divalent hydrocarbon group or heterocyclic group, or a salt thereof.

2. (Cancel) ~~A neurotrophin production/secretion promoting agent which comprises a prodrug of an azole derivative or a salt thereof as defined in Claim 1.~~

3. (AMENDED) **A method** [~~An agent~~] according to Claim 1, wherein R^1 is a nitrogen-containing **5-membered aromatic** heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted.

4. (Cancel) ~~An agent according to Claim 1, wherein R^1 is an aromatic heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted~~.

5. (Cancel) ~~An agent according to Claim 1, wherein R^1 is a nitrogen-containing 5-membered aromatic heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted~~.

6. (AMENDED) **A method** [~~An agent~~] according to Claim 1, wherein R^1 is an imidazolyl group which may optionally be substituted.

7. (Cancel) ~~An agent according to Claim 1, wherein A is a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted, or a hydroxy group which may optionally be substituted~~.

8. (AMENDED) **A method** [~~An agent~~] according to Claim 1, wherein A is an aryloxy group which may optionally be substituted.

9. (AMENDED) **A method** [~~An agent~~] according to Claim 1, wherein A is a phenoxy group substituted with an alkyl group which may optionally be substituted.

10. (AMENDED) **A method** [~~An agent~~] according to Claim 1, wherein B is a phenyl group which may optionally be substituted.

11. (AMENDED) **A method** [~~An agent~~] according to Claim 1, wherein Y is a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon group.

12. (AMENDED) **A method** [~~An agent~~] according to Claim 1, wherein X is -O-.

13. (AMENDED) **A method** [~~An agent~~] according to Claim 1, wherein X is -S-.

14. (CANCEL) ~~An agent according to Claim 1, wherein X is $-NR^4-$ wherein R^4 represents a hydrogen atom, a hydrocarbon group which may optionally be substituted, an acyl group which may optionally be substituted, or a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted~~.

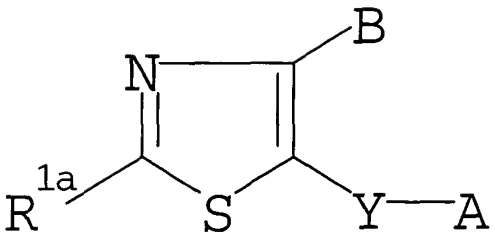
15. (AMENDED) **A method** [~~An agent~~] according to Claim 1, wherein the azole derivative is

4-(4-chlorophenyl)-2-(2-methyl-1-imidazolyl)-5-oxazolepropanol,
4-(4-chlorophenyl)-2-(2-methyl-1-imidazolyl)-5-oxazolebutanol,
4-(4-chlorophenyl)-5-[3-(1-imidazolyl)propyl]-2-(2-methyl-1-imidazolyl)oxazole,
4-(4-chlorophenyl)-2-(2-methyl-1-imidazolyl)-5-oxazolepentanol,
4-(4-chlorophenyl)-5-[4-(1-imidazolyl)butyl]-2-(2-methyl-1-imidazolyl)oxazole,
3-[3-[4-(4-chlorophenyl)-2-(2-methyl-1-imidazolyl)-5-oxazolyl]propyl]-1-methyl-2,4-imidazolidinedione,
4-(4-chlorophenyl)-5-[3-(2-methoxyphenoxy)propyl]-2-(2-methyl-1-imidazolyl)oxazole,
4-(4-chlorophenyl)-5-[3-(3-methoxyphenoxy)propyl]-2-(2-methyl-1-imidazolyl)oxazole,
4-(4-chlorophenyl)-5-[3-(4-methoxyphenoxy)propyl]-2-(2-methyl-1-imidazolyl)oxazole, or
4-(4-chlorophenyl)-2-(2-methyl-1-imidazolyl)-5-[3-(2-methylphenoxy)propyl]oxazole.

16. (Cancel) ~~An agent according to Claim 1 which is a prophylactic/therapeutic agent for neuropathy.~~

17. (Cancel) ~~An agent according to Claim 1 which is a prophylactic/therapeutic agent for peripheral neuropathy~~.

18. (AMENDED) **A method according to Claim 1, wherein the** azole ~~A thiazole~~ derivative **is** of the formula :



wherein R^{1a} represents a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted; A represents an acyl group which may optionally be substituted, a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted, a hydroxy group which may optionally be substituted, or a carboxyl group which may optionally be esterified or amidated; B represents an aromatic group which may optionally be substituted; and Y represents a divalent hydrocarbon group or heterocyclic group, or a salt thereof.

19. (CANCEL) ~~A prodrug of a thiazole derivative or a salt thereof as defined in Claim 18.~~

20. (AMENDED) A **method** ~~thiazole derivative~~ according to Claim 18, wherein R^{1a} is a nitrogen-containing 5-membered aromatic heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted.

21. (AMENDED) A **method** ~~thiazole derivative~~ according to Claim 18, wherein R^{1a} is an imidazolyl group which may optionally be substituted.

22. (AMENDED) A **method** ~~thiazole derivative~~ according to Claim 18, wherein A is an aryloxy group which may optionally be substituted.

23. (AMENDED) A **method** ~~thiazole derivative~~ according to Claim 18, wherein B is a phenyl group which may optionally be substituted.

24. (AMENDED) A **method** ~~thiazole derivative~~ according to Claim 18, wherein Y is a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon group.

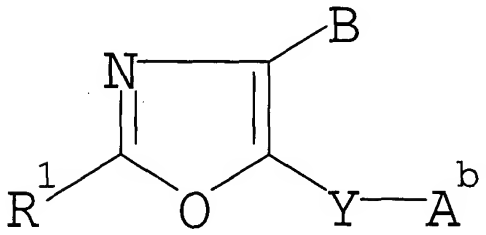
25. (Cancel) ~~A pharmaceutical composition which comprises a thiazole derivative or a salt thereof as defined in Claim 18.~~

26. (Cancel) ~~A composition according to Claim 25 which is a neurotrophin production/secretion promoting agent~~.

27. (Cancel) ~~A composition according to Claim 25 which is a prophylactic/therapeutic agent for neuropathy~~.

28. (Cancel) ~~A composition according to Claim 25 which is a prophylactic/therapeutic agent for peripheral neuropathy.~~

29. (AMENDED) **A method according to Claim 1, wherein the azole derivative is** ~~An oxazole derivative~~ of the formula :



wherein R^1 represents a halogen atom, a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted, a hydroxy group which may optionally be substituted, a thiol group which may optionally be substituted, or an amino group which may optionally be substituted; A^b represents an aryloxy group which is substituted by an alkyl group and may further be substituted; B represents an aromatic group which may optionally be substituted; and Y represents a divalent hydrocarbon group or heterocyclic group, or a salt thereof.

30. (AMENDED) **A method** ~~An oxazole derivative~~ according to Claim 29, wherein A^b is an aryloxy group which is substituted by an alkyl group.

31. (Cancel) ~~A prodrug of an oxazole derivative or a salt thereof as defined in Claim 29~~.

32. (AMENDED) **A method** ~~An oxazole derivative~~ according to Claim 29, wherein R^1 is a nitrogen-containing 5-membered aromatic heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted.

33. (AMENDED) **A method** ~~An oxazole derivative~~ according to Claim 29, wherein R^1 is an imidazolyl group which may optionally be substituted.

34. (AMENDED) **A method** ~~An oxazole derivative~~ according to Claim 33, wherein R^1 is an imidazolyl group which may optionally be substituted by a C_{1-10} alkyl.

35. (AMENDED) **A method** ~~An oxazole derivative~~ according to Claim 29, wherein B is a phenyl group which may optionally be substituted.

36. (AMENDED) **A method** ~~An oxazole derivative~~ according to Claim 35, wherein B is a phenyl group which may optionally be substituted by halogens.

37. (AMENDED) **A method** ~~An oxazole derivative~~ according to Claim 29, wherein Y is a divalent aliphatic hydrocarbon group.

38. (AMENDED) **A method** ~~An oxazole derivative~~ according to Claim 37, wherein Y is a divalent C_{1-4} aliphatic hydrocarbon group.

39. (Cancel) ~~A pharmaceutical composition which comprises an oxazole derivative or a salt thereof as defined in Claim 29~~.

40. (Cancel) ~~A composition according to Claim 39 which is a neurotrophin production/secretion promoting agent~~.

41. (Cancel) ~~A composition according to Claim 39 which is a prophylactic/therapeutic agent for neuropathy.~~

42. (Cancel) ~~A composition according to Claim 39 which is a prophylactic/therapeutic agent for peripheral neuropathy~~.

43. (AMENDED) **A method according to Claim 29, wherein the azole derivative is** 4-(4-Chlorophenyl)-2-(2-methyl-1-imidazolyl)-5-[3-(2-methylphenoxy)propyl]oxazole or a salt thereof.

44. (Cancel) ~~A crystal of 4-(4-chlorophenyl)-2-(2-methyl-1-imidazolyl)-5-[3-(2-methylphenoxy)propyl]oxazole or a salt thereof~~.

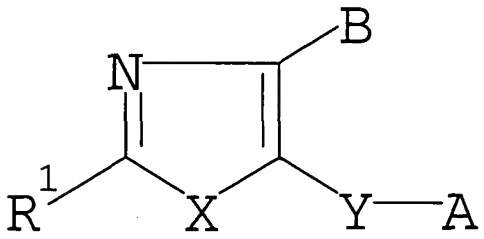
45. (AMENDED) **A method according to Claim 29, wherein the azole derivative is** 4-(4-Chlorophenyl)-2-(2-methyl-1-imidazolyl)-5-[3-(3-methylphenoxy)propyl]oxazole or a salt thereof.

46. (Cancel) ~~A crystal of 4-(4-chlorophenyl)-2-(2-methyl-1-imidazolyl)-5-[3-(3-methylphenoxy)propyl]oxazole or a salt thereof~~.

47. (AMENDED) **A method according to Claim 29, wherein the azole derivative is** 5-[3-(4-Chloro-2-methylphenoxy)propyl]-4-(4-chlorophenyl)-2-(2-methyl-1-imidazolyl)oxazole or a salt thereof.

48. (Cancel) ~~A crystal of 5-[3-(4-chloro-2-methylphenoxy)propyl]-4-(4-chlorophenyl)-2-(2-methyl-1-imidazolyl)oxazole or a salt thereof~~.

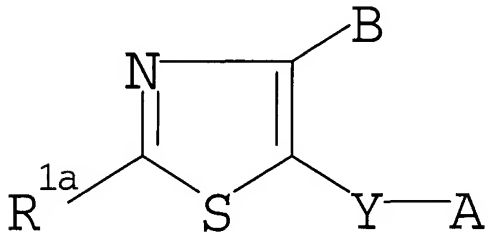
49. (Cancel) ~~A method for promoting neurotrophin production/secretion in a mammal in need thereof, which comprises administering to said mammal an effective amount of an azole derivative of the formula :~~



~~wherein R^1 represents a halogen atom, a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted, a hydroxy group which may optionally be substituted, a thiol group which may optionally be substituted, or an amino group which may optionally be substituted; A represents an acyl group~~

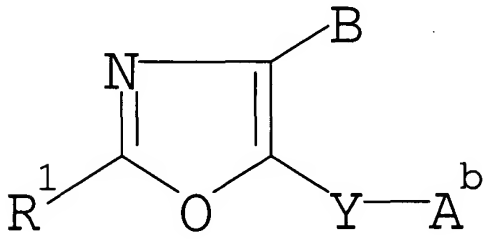
~~which may optionally be substituted, a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted, a hydroxy group which may optionally be substituted, or a carboxyl group which may optionally be esterified or amidated; B represents an aromatic group which may optionally be substituted; X represents oxygen atom, sulfur atom, or nitrogen atom which may optionally be substituted; and Y represents a divalent hydrocarbon group or heterocyclic group, or a salt thereof.~~

50. (Cancel) ~~A method for promoting neurotrophin production/secretion in a mammal in need thereof, which comprises administering to said mammal an effective amount of a thiazole derivative of the formula :~~



~~wherein R^{1a} represents a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted; A represents an acyl group which may optionally be substituted, a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted, a hydroxy group which may optionally be substituted, or a carboxyl group which may optionally be esterified or amidated; B represents an aromatic group which may optionally be substituted; and Y represents a divalent hydrocarbon group or heterocyclic group, or a salt thereof.~~

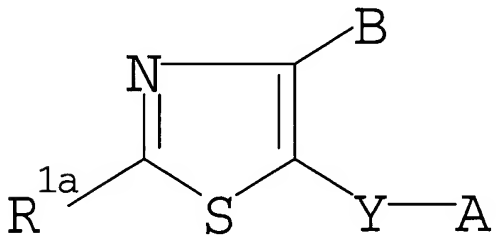
51. (Cancel) ~~A method for promoting neurotrophin production/secretion in a mammal in need thereof, which comprises administering to said mammal an effective amount of an oxazole derivative of the formula :~~



~~wherein R^{1} represents a halogen atom, a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted, a hydroxy group which may optionally be substituted, a thiol group which may optionally be substituted, or an amino group which may optionally be substituted; A^{b} represents an aryloxy~~

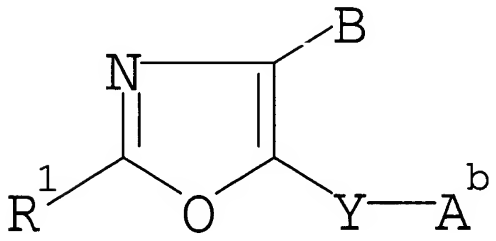
~~group which is substituted by an alkyl group and may further be substituted; B represents an aromatic group which may optionally be substituted; and Y represents a divalent hydrocarbon group or heterocyclic group, or a salt thereof.~~

52. (Cancel) ~~A method for preventing or treating neuropathy in a mammal in need thereof, which comprises administering to said mammal an effective amount of a thiazole derivative of the formula:~~



~~wherein R^{1a} represents a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted; A represents an acyl group which may optionally be substituted, a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted, a hydroxy group which may optionally be substituted, or a carboxyl group which may optionally be esterified or amidated; B represents an aromatic group which may optionally be substituted; and Y represents a divalent hydrocarbon group or heterocyclic group, or a salt thereof.~~

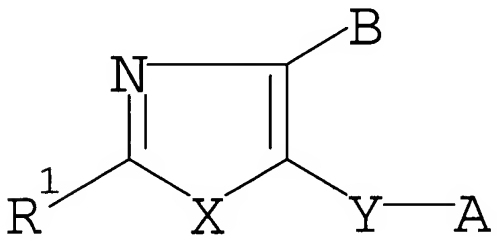
53. (Cancel) ~~A method for preventing or treating neuropathy in a mammal in need thereof, which comprises administering to said mammal an effective amount of an oxazole derivative of the formula:~~



~~wherein R^1 represents a halogen atom, a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted, a hydroxy group which may optionally be substituted, a thiol group which may optionally be substituted, or an amino group which may optionally be substituted; A^b represents an aryloxy group which is substituted by an alkyl group and may further be substituted; B represents an~~

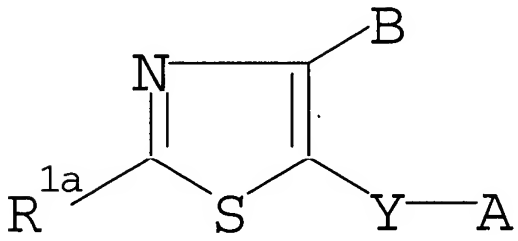
~~aromatic group which may optionally be substituted; and Y represents a divalent hydrocarbon group or heterocyclic group, or a salt thereof~~.

54. (Cancel) ~~Use of an azole derivative of the formula :~~



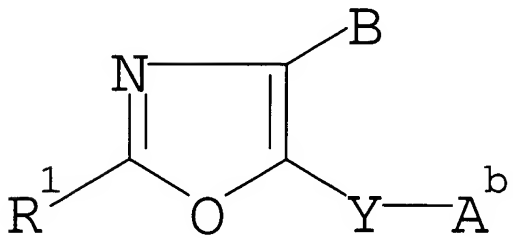
~~wherein R^1 represents a halogen atom, a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted, a hydroxy group which may optionally be substituted, a thiol group which may optionally be substituted, or an amino group which may optionally be substituted; A represents an acyl group which may optionally be substituted, a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted, a hydroxy group which may optionally be substituted, or a carboxyl group which may optionally be esterified or amidated; B represents an aromatic group which may optionally be substituted; X represents oxygen atom, sulfur atom, or nitrogen atom which may optionally be substituted; and Y represents a divalent hydrocarbon group or heterocyclic group, or a salt thereof,~~
~~for the manufacture of a neurotrophin production/secretion promoting agent~~.

55. (Cancel) ~~Use of a thiazole derivative of the formula :~~



~~wherein R^{1a} represents a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted; A represents an acyl group which may optionally be substituted, a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted, a hydroxy group which may optionally be substituted, or a carboxyl group which may optionally be esterified or amidated; B represents an aromatic group which may optionally be substituted; and Y represents a divalent hydrocarbon group or heterocyclic group, or a salt thereof,~~
~~for the manufacture of a neurotrophin production/secretion promoting agent~~.

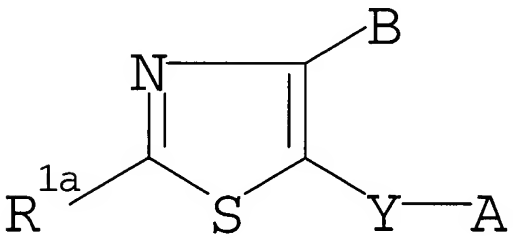
56. (Cancel) ~~Use of an oxazole derivative of the formula :~~



~~wherein R^1 represents a halogen atom, a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted, a hydroxy group which may optionally be substituted, a thiol group which may optionally be substituted, or an amino group which may optionally be substituted; A^b represents an aryloxy group which is substituted by an alkyl group and may further be substituted; B represents an aromatic group which may optionally be substituted; and Y represents a divalent hydrocarbon group or heterocyclic group, or a salt thereof,~~

~~for the manufacture of a neurotrophin production/secretion promoting agent~~.

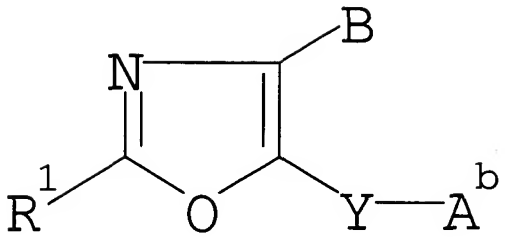
57. (Cancel) ~~Use of a thiazole derivative of the formula :~~



~~wherein R^{1a} represents a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted; A represents an acyl group which may optionally be substituted, a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted, a hydroxy group which may optionally be substituted, or a carboxyl group which may optionally be esterified or amidated; B represents an aromatic group which may optionally be substituted; and Y represents a divalent hydrocarbon group or heterocyclic group, or a salt thereof,~~

~~for the manufacture of a pharmaceutical preparation for preventing or treating neuropathy~~.

58. (Cancel) ~~Use of an oxazole derivative of the formula :~~



~~wherein R^1 represents a halogen atom, a heterocyclic group which may optionally be substituted, a hydroxy group which may optionally be substituted, a thiol group which may optionally be substituted, or an amino group which may optionally be substituted; A^b represents an aryloxy group which is substituted by an alkyl group and may further be substituted; B represents an aromatic group which may optionally be substituted; and Y represents a divalent hydrocarbon group or heterocyclic group, or a salt thereof,~~

~~for the manufacture of a pharmaceutical preparation for preventing or treating neuropathy~~.